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MALICE IN KULTURLAND



BY HORACE WYATT
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BY
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With Illustrations by W. TELL.

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MALICE IN KULTURLAND.

By HORACE WYATT.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHANGE.

OF course, it was very unfortunate that Alice should be ill at all, and it was certainly particularly unlucky that she should have chosen the time when the summer holidays were just going to begin.

It was one lovely day towards the end of July when she first had a bad headache and a hot tongue, and the doctor came and said that she was to stay in her room as "he was not sure," but would come again next day. It was terribly dull, though she had lots of books and papers to read. Alice liked papers best, but really there was nothing much in them just then, except a very long account of a trial in France, and a lot of speeches about "Home Rule" and "Exclusion" and other things that she didn't understand. However, she managed to find out that everyone was very concerned about the possibility of civil war in Ireland, the question of whether people in

a really good social position ought not to be allowed to shoot editors if they wanted to, and particularly the falling off of gates at county cricket matches, and the difficulty of finding a first-class English heavyweight boxer. It was on account of these last two troubles that most of the papers agreed that the British Empire had begun to decline. There was a general impression that the modern Englishman had no brains and less pluck, and would be quite useless in an emergency. This was a bad look-out in itself, and the papers pointed out that what made things worse was the horrible depravity of our political leaders. Between them, they proved beyond a doubt that our statesmen of all parties were quacks and liars, watching only their own interests, and never for a moment considering those of the nation.

Alice was rather puzzled to know why, in that case, the nation chose such people to look after its affairs, but she felt much too ill to try and think it out. She had a vague recollection of being put to bed, and of someone talking about "fever," and "delirious," and "very bad." She thought it was silly of them to put her to bed, because she had heard that most people die in their beds. She tried to explain that it would be safer for her to stop up, but nobody took any notice. Then everything began to go round and

round, and to turn upside down and inside out, and some things got bigger and others smaller, until it made her head ache to look at them, and she shut her eyes and forgot about everything.

When she woke up again she felt very lazy and couldn't remember just at first what had happened. "I suppose it was because I was ill," she thought, "that everything seemed so queer! Wouldn't it be funny if everything *really* got topsy-turvy, and lost its original proportions! Then everyone, instead of being friendly, would want to fight everyone else! And there would be uncivil wars instead of civil ones! And people we thought were nice would turn out to be horrid! And people we thought were horrid would turn out to be nice! And I *do* wonder how it would all end!"

"Wait and see!" said a solemn voice quite close to her ear. Alice was very startled, and opened her eyes hurriedly. She found she was sitting in an easy chair in a big garden with a lot of unfamiliar looking animals in it, and just opposite to her was a queer bird of a sort she had never seen before.

"Did you speak?" asked Alice.

"The answer to the question is in the affirmative," announced the bird very deliberately.

“Might I ask what sort of a bird you are?” Alice inquired.

“You might, and on the other hand you might not,” said the Bird very slowly. “As a matter of fact, I am a Dodo. I used to call myself a Liberal, some other people used to call me a Radical, and plenty of others used to call me everything they could lay their tongues to.”

“But I thought the Dodo was extinct,” said Alice.

“So it is,” said the Bird, “for the present, quite extinct. And there’s another extinct party somewhere about the garden. He’s called a Lory or a Tory, I forget which, and at the present moment he’s over there doing spade work. He’s busy burying the hatchet. We’re *very* friendly, you know?”

“Indeed!” said Alice politely, “I thought you were great enemies.”

“So we were, so we were,” said the Dodo. “But now everything is different; we have no time to quarrel.”

“Not even about Ireland?” asked Alice.

“Ireland—now let me see,” said the Dodo. “Ah, yes,” he added after a pause; “now you mention it, there was some slight bickering in that quarter. I don’t clearly remember what the



"Might I ask what sort of bird you are?" Alice inquired.

trouble was ; but, anyhow, it's all right now."

" How is that ? " asked Alice.

" It's because of the war," the Dodo explained. " I will tell you all about it in the simplest possible language. Listen carefully, and don't interrupt—

*" 'Twas dertag, and the slithy Huns
Did sturm and sturgel through the sludge ;
All bulgons were the blunderguns,
And the bosch bombs outbludge.*

*" Beware the Ulsterman, my son—
The jaws that bite at kin and kith ;
Beware the Carsonclan, and shun
The frumious Ridersmith.'*

*" He put his vetal schemes in hand ;
Long time the welcome end he sought ;
So rested he by the Redmond Tree,
And stood awhile in thought.*

*" And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Kaiserhog, with eyes of flame,
Came prumpling through the tulgey wood,
And blasphied as he came !*

*" One, two ! Quick, quick ! In half a tick,
The vetal schemes split far and wide.
Orange and green were promptly seen
Advancing side by side.*



*"The Kaiserhog, with eyes of flame,
Came prumpling through the tulgey wood."*

“ ‘And is the Kaiserhog at large ?
Then show him to your blarney boy !
Oh, frabjous day ! Hurroo ! Hurray !’
They chortled in there joy.

“ ‘Twas dertag, and the slithy Huns
Did sturm and sturgel through the sludge ;
All bulgous were the blunderguns,
And the bosch bombs outbludge.”

“ Thank you very much,” said Alice ; “ it was kind of you to explain it to me. But it’s just a *little* difficult to understand, isn’t it ? ”

“ Perhaps so,” said the Dodo. “ You see, so many words have lost all their original meaning. ‘Treaty,’ for example, or ‘culture’ ! So we have to make up new ones that never meant anything before.”

“ What is bulgous ? ” Alice asked.

“ Oh that’s easy,” said the Dodo. “ You know that ‘slithy’ is a mixture of ‘lithe’ and ‘slimy’ ; well, ‘bulgous’ is a mixture of ‘bulky’ and ‘tremenjous’ ; and ‘outbludge’ is what a bomb does ; and ‘vetal’ is either ‘vital’ or ‘venal,’ according to your politics ; and ‘prumpling’ is ‘proud and trampling’ ; and all the rest is quite simple.”

“ But has *everything* changed into something different ? ” Alice asked.

“*Nearly* everything,” said the Dodo. “If you look over there, you’ll see a Garvin with its arm round a Winston’s neck. That’s new, isn’t it? And *there’s* a militant suffragette with her mouth shut. That’s new, isn’t it? And the Lory has given up laying down the bonar law, and says, ‘Hear, hear!’ whenever *I* speak. That’s new, isn’t it? And all the papers say what their readers think about the Kaiser, instead of what they think the Government would like the Kaiser to think the papers think their readers think. And *that’s* new, isn’t it? And if you tried to say anything, or to think about anything, you’d find it was only something to do with the war, after all.”

“Should I?” said Alice, very puzzled.

“Certainly!” said the Dodo. “Try it for yourself. Repeat ‘How doth the little busy bee.’”

Alice began :—

“*How doth the German Press Bureau
Improve each shining tale,
Till Victory’s unceasing flow
Seems ‘very like a whale !’*”

“*How thick its yarns—and yet how thin !
How wide it spreads its views,
And takes the simple public in
With gently garbled news.*”

“ Well ? ” said the Dodo.

“ Yes, it *does* seem different,” Alice admitted doubtfully.

“ Try again,” said the Dodo. “ Repeat ‘There’s a home for little children’ ”

Alice thought for a moment, and repeated :—

“ *There’s a home for little William*
Beyond the deep blue sea,
Where everything is placid—
Yes, as placid as can be.

“ *Where life is one bright circle*
Of sunny summer days,
And none will seek to interfere
With Willie’s peaceful ways.

“ *Oh, happy St. Helena,*
When all is calm and still,
And your lone shores provide the cheque
To pay our little bill ! ”

“ It *is* different ! ” exclaimed Alice. “ Quite different ! But why ? ”

“ It’s because of everything that’s happening,” said the Dodo. “ It’s the fault of the Blonde Beast, and Army-Balmy, and a lot more of them, especially the Kaiserhog.”

“ And where do all these queer things live ? ” Alice asked. “ Can I *see* them ? ”

“Why certainly,” said the Dodo, “come with me.” Alice got up, and was pleased to find that she was quite well and strong again. As they walked across the grass the Dodo went on—

“They are all in the wood,” he said, “right in the wood. And what’s more, I don’t think they can get out of the wood. That’s the way,” he added, pointing to a narrow path among the trees, “and now I must leave you. I have some business to attend to.”

Alice said “good-bye” very politely, and went on into the wood. Just as she reached a corner in the path she looked back and saw the Dodo trotting up to the Lory. “Bonar, dear,” she heard him say, “I want to consult you about something.” “Yes, Herbert darling,” said the Lory, “and I’m sure we shall agree about it,” and they went off arm in arm.

CHAPTER II.

THE DUEL MONARCHY.

THE path into the wood twisted and turned, first one way and then another, until Alice got quite frightened that she would be lost. She tried to walk back to the garden, but only succeeded in getting further and further into the wood. Presently she came to a place where the path spread out into a little grass plot, in which two queer little men were standing under a tree, each with an arm round the other's neck.

Though they were very much alike, Alice knew in a moment which was which, because one was very neat and trim in uniform, and the other was wearing an ill-fitting Czech Croat with Magyar sleeves. Besides, the first had "Francis" embroidered on his belt in German characters, while the second was labelled "Joseph," written in a language that looked like fretwork.

They stood so still that she quite forgot that they were alive, and she was just walking round to see if they were really as friendly as they

looked, when she was startled by a voice coming from the one marked "Joseph."

"If you think we're object-lessons," he said, "you ought to pay, you know. Experience can't be bought for nothing. Nohow!"

"Contrariwise," added the one marked "Francis," "if you think we've any vitality in us, you ought to accept our terms."

"I'm sure I'm very sorry," was all Alice could say; for she couldn't help thinking that they were a badly assorted couple, and that, if Francis didn't keep a tight hold on Joseph, they would fall out and never come together again.

"I know what you're thinking about," said Francis, "but it isn't so, nohow!"

"Contrariwise," continued Joseph, "if it is so, it might be; if it isn't, it ain't, and you never can tell. That's logic."

"I was wondering," Alice said very politely, "if you know the way out of this wood?"

"Nohow. And thank you *very* much for asking," said Francis.

"So much obliged!" added Joseph. "You like diplomacy?"

“Ye-es, pretty well—*some* diplomacy,” Alice said doubtfully. “Would you please tell me the way out of the wood?”

“The essence of diplomacy,” said Joseph, “is circumlocution combined with obscurity. We will reply to the question in a diplomatic manner. Which method shall we adopt?” he added, looking round at his brother with great solemn eyes.

“Our own, of course,” said Francis, and began at once:

“*The dew was falling due,*
The stars began to blink,
I heard a raucous voice that said,
‘Drink, little Serbia, drink.

“*Swallow your natural pride,*
Gulp down our insults, too,
And drink the nasty medicine up,
That we’ve prepared for you.

“*Grovel before our feet,*
Lick our Imperial boot,
Trot out your beastly officers
That we intend to shoot.

“*Reorganise your schools,*
Make politics a crime,
Or——”

“*That’s not diplomacy,*” Joseph interrupted,

giving his brother an unnecessarily hard dig in the ribs ; “any *child* could see what it means ! Now the method of ‘the Kaiser and the Chancellor’ is *much* more obscure.”

“Oh, well ! Have it your own way for once,” Francis grumbled.

Joseph started instantly :

“*The place was basking——*”

Here Alice ventured to interrupt him. “If it’s very obscure,” she said, as politely as she could, “would you please tell me plainly how to get out of the wood ?”

Joseph smiled gently, and began again :

“*The place was basking in the sun,*
Extremely warm and bright;
The mailed fist was stretching out
To grab whate’er it might;
And this was very wrong, because
It wasn’t very right.

“*The world was watching sulkily,*
A frown upon her face,
Because she thought the mailed fist
Distinctly out of place.
‘*His clear intention,’ she remarked,*
‘Amounts to a disgrace.’

“ *The Kaiser and the Chancellor*
Were walking hand in hand ;
They wept like anything to see
Such lots of foreign land ;
‘ *If this were only Germanised,*
They said, ‘ it would be grand !’

“ ‘ *If seven hosts of peaceful huns*
Swept it with fire and sword,
Do you suppose,’ the Kaiser said,
‘ *Culture could be restored ?*’
‘ *I doubt it,’ said the Chancellor,*
And looked a trifle bored.

“ ‘ *Oh, Nations, come and walk with us,*’
The wily Kaiser cried,
‘ *A pleasant talk, a pleasant walk,*
O’er frontiers far and wide ;
For we can do with two of you
To help on either side !’

“ *The wise Italian winked his eye*
And cautiously arose ;
Then slowly spread his fingers out
And placed them to his nose,
Meaning to say that he would do
Exactly as he chose.

“ *But Hungary Austrians hurried up,*
Eager to take a hand,
Willing to walk a little way
Behind the German band ;
Their simple Czechs looked out of place
‘ *Midst uniforms so grand.*



“If this were only Germanised,” they said, “it would be grand!”

“ *The Kaiser and the Chancellor*
Walked on a mile or two,
Until they reached the Balkan States,
Conveniently new ;
A spot where raising trouble was
An easy thing to do.

“ ‘ *The time has come,’ the Kaiser said,*
‘ To talk of blood and wars ;
Of Me, and Germany, and God ;
And Culture, and the Cause ;
And why the sea is much too hot ;
And whether bears have claws !’

“ ‘ *Please, sir,’ the simple Austrians cried,*
Turning a little blue,
‘ We did not know that was the sort
Of thing you meant to do !’
‘ *How kind I am,’ the Kaiser said,*
‘ To plan this treat for you !

“ ‘ *A place within the summer sun*
Is what attracts my gaze ;
A certain studied frightfulness
Shall hall-mark all our ways ;
So hand your dry old treaties up,
And let us start the blaze !

“ ‘ *It was so nice of you to come*
And help us toe the line ;
Your aid is quite essential to
My long-prepared design !’
The Chancellor said nothing but,
‘ This paper’s burning fine !’

“ ‘ *It seems a shame,’ the Austrians cried,*
‘ *To kindle such a fire;*
The dirty smoke is in our eyes;
Our feet are in the mire.’
The Kaiser answered nothing but,
‘ *Send off another wire !*’

“ ‘ *I mourn you,’ said the Chancellor,*
‘ *I deeply sympathise,*
We did not know the job was such
A very nasty size !’
The Kaiser put his helmet on,
And looked extremely wise.

“ ‘ *Oh, Austrians,’ said the Chancellor,*
‘ *You are a simple race,*
Shall we be trotting off to find
Some other sunny place ?’—
But answer came there none, because
They’d vanished into space.”

“ I like the Chancellor best,” said Alice,
“ because he was a *little* sorry for the poor
Austrians.”

“ It was his doing, though,” said Francis.
“ He worked out the whole scheme, because he
was cleverer than the Kaiser; contrariwise.”

“ In that case,” Alice said indignantly, “ I
certainly like the Kaiser best.”

“ But it was all done for his benefit,” said
Joseph.

This was a puzzler. After a pause, Alice began: "Well! They were both very unpleasant characters—" Here she checked herself in some alarm, at hearing something that sounded to her like the grunting of a million pigs.

"It's only the Red King snoring," said Francis; "come and look at him," the Twins cried, and they each took one of Alice's hands and led her up to where the king was sleeping.

"Isn't he a *lovely* sight?" said Francis.

Alice couldn't say honestly that he was. His head was very swollen, his feet were much too large for his boots, and altogether he was a very unpleasant object.

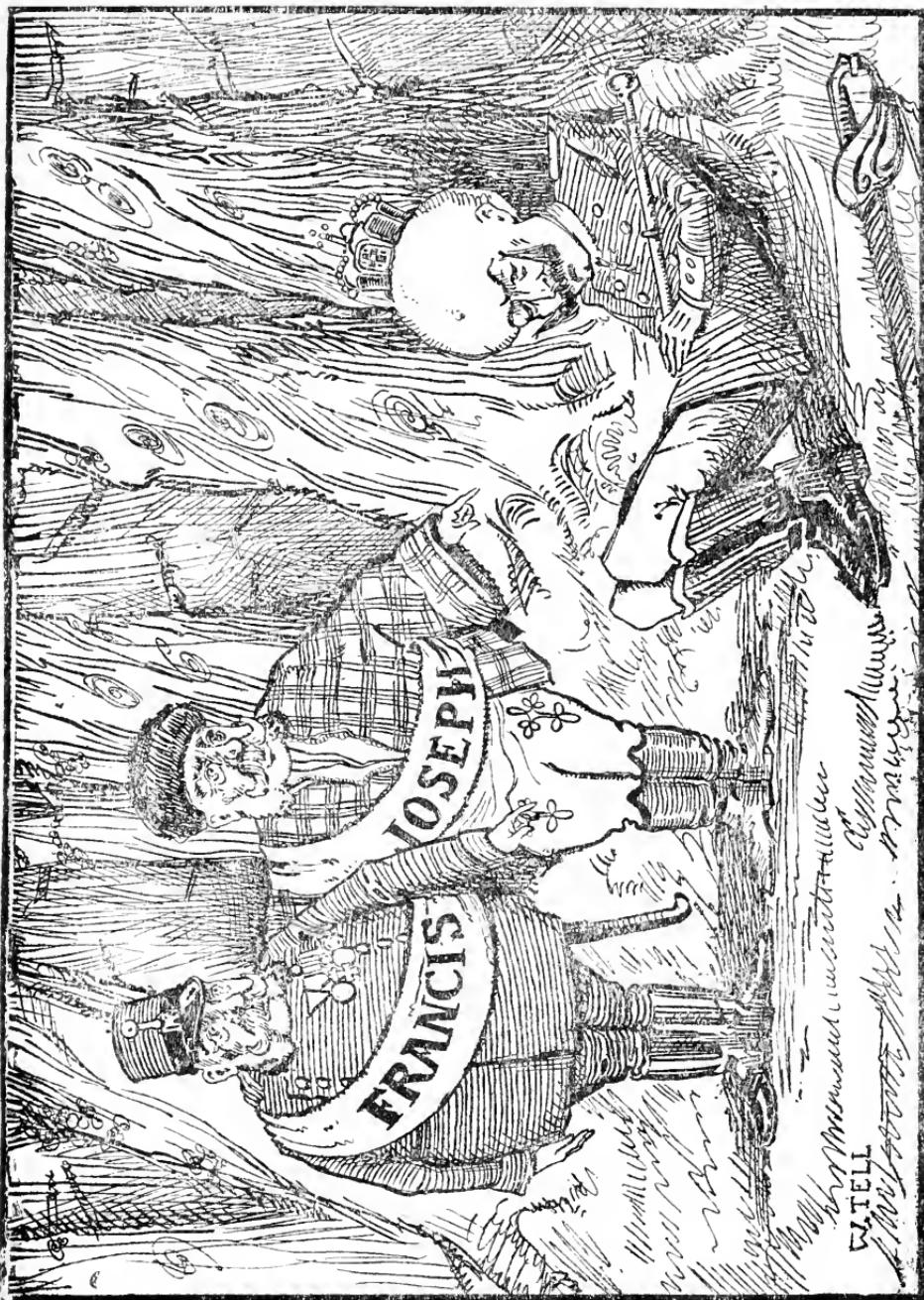
"He's dreaming now," said Francis, "and what do you think he's dreaming about?"

Alice said: "Nobody can guess that."

"Why, about *you*!" Francis exclaimed. "And about *us*! And about the whole world. Why, you're only a sort of thing in his dream."

"If that there king was to wake," added Joseph, "you'd go out—bang!—just like a candle!"

"I shouldn't!" Alice exclaimed indignantly. "Besides, if *I'm* only a sort of thing in his dream, what are *you*, I should like to know?"



“ ‘If that there king was to wake, you’d go out—bang!—just like a candle!’ ”

“Ditto,” said Francis.

“Ditto, ditto,” cried Joseph. “There isn’t *anything* he can’t dream. Why, he can dream he’s got the world, and the moon, and a place in the sun! And one day he’ll wake up.”

The Red King snored more loudly than ever, and rolled his head about as if he was very uncomfortable.

“Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown!” remarked Francis sententiously.

“*He* lies easy enough,” retorted Joseph. “He’ll be much more uneasy when he loses the thing.”

“His dream must be very, very beautiful!” said Francis, gazing at him admiringly.

“More like a nightmare, *I* should think,” said Joseph.

“I tell you it’s a dream!” shouted Francis angrily.

“And *I* tell *you* it’s a nightmare!” screamed Joseph. There was a pause, and the Twins glared angrily at one another.

“You will apologise, of course?” asked Francis.

“Contrariwise and nohow,” said Joseph decidedly.

“Then we must fight,” said Francis.

“Who?” Joseph inquired innocently. “I don’t see anyone small enough to make it really safe.”

“In that case,” said Francis, “we must fight one another. Of course, you will observe the rules of war?”

“Certainly,” said Joseph, “the German rules. You’d better read them to us,” he added, handing a large roll of parchment to Alice.

Alice opened the parchment and read aloud:—

“Rule 1.—A place in the sun is worth two in the shade.

Rule 2.—In for a penny, in for a pounding.

Rule 3.—Many a meddle makes a muddle.”

“I suppose ‘medal’ means ‘iron cross’?” inquired Joseph.

“Contrariwise,” said Francis, “it’s spelt the other way.”

“Rule 4.—The pen is mightier than the sword.”

“ But it doesn’t seem to have the effect we expected on American opinion,” Francis remarked.

“ Rule 5.—Many lies, found foolish.

Rule 6.—It’s one thing to bray and another thing to do.”

“ I always thought that official news bureau was a mistake,” said Joseph. “ It’s an ass in Wolff’s clothing, *I think.*”

“ Rule 7.—It never rains but it pours.”

“ Iron crosses again,” Joseph groaned.

“ Rule 8.—There are better ships on the sea than ever kept out of it.

Rule 9.—What’s yours is mined, and what’s mined is my own.”

“ That *must* refer to the *Yorck!*” cried Francis, bursting into tears.

“ Never mind,” said Alice, trying to console him.

“ You mean ‘ no matter,’ don’t you? ” Joseph inquired.

“ No, I don’t! ” Alice retorted. Mind can’t be matter, you know.”

“ Possibly,” said Joseph, “ but matter *can* be mined. Go on.”

Alice continued—

“ Rule 10.—It’s a long line that has no turning.

Rule 11.—The end justifies the means.

Rule 12.—All’s fair in love and war.”

“ In that case,” said Joseph, “ the long and short of it is that we can play any dirty trick we——”

He never finished the sentence, for at this moment the Red King gave a terrible grunt, and began to wave his mailed fists wildly in the air.

“ He’s going to wake!” screamed the Twins. “ And if he does, it’s all up with us. Run for your life.”

They both turned tail and bolted into the wood, and Alice thought she had better follow; but she soon lost sight of them, and presently found herself walking straight up to a large house standing on a sort of island, not exactly in the wood, and not exactly out of it.

CHAPTER III.

LIMELIGHTERS AND RUMOUR.

FOR a minute or two she stood looking at the house, and wondering what to do next, when suddenly a footman came running out of the wood—she considered him to be a footman because he was in livery; otherwise, she would have called him a pig—and rapped loudly on the door. It was opened by a sentry in uniform, with a face like a Bull-Dog.

The Pig-Footman began by producing from under his arm a large and very dirty letter, with crowns stamped all over it, and this he handed to the other, saying in a solemn tone: “For the Duchess. An ultimatum from the Kaiser to expire at midnight.” The Dog-Sentry repeated, in the same solemn tone, only changing the order of the words a little: “From the Kaiser. An ultimatum for the Duchess to expire at midnight.” Then they both bowed very low; the Pig-Footman ran back into the wood with his arms full of a lot more big letters, and the Dog-



"The Pig-Footman began by producing a large and very dirty letter."

sentry stood at attention on the top of the steps.

“Why does the Kaiser want the Duchess to expire at midnight?” Alice asked politely.

“Have you *met* the Duchess?” said the Dog.

“No,” said Alice; “I haven’t had the pleasure.”

“I don’t know about pleasure,” said the Dog; “but if you had you wouldn’t ask silly questions.”

“Is she *very* objectionable then?” Alice inquired.

“She’s a Limelighter,” said the Dog, as if that settled the matter.

“What does that mean?” asked Alice.

“It means,” said the Dog, “a person who gets into the limelight—and sticks in it, too. Duchesses aren’t all Limelighters, and Limelighters aren’t all Duchesses; but, anyhow, they are the nastiest things we’ve got in the house. And if you want to know any more you’d better go and ask her. Why don’t you ring the bell?”

Alice did as he suggested, but got no reply.

“Keep on ringing,” said the Dog; “and you might keep your eye on the wood at the same time. I want to have a look at the news.”

He sat on the steps and took a big newspaper out of his pocket. "Very interesting," he remarked after a pause, "listen to this—

*"Some Boers from the Cape
Have got into a scrape
Through attending to treacherous liars;
But I'm credibly told
They are bound to be sold,
Now that Botha is out after Beyers."*

"And here's some more," he added, turning over the paper; "I'll read it to you," and he began—

“RESULT OF GREAT (BLANK-DASH)
ATTACK.

[FROM OUR OWN EXPERT AT THE BACK.]

(Submitted to the Press Bureau,
Who will not swear it's true, although
They do not think its publication
Will jeopardise the British nation.)

A TOWN IN EUROPE,
(Blank) o'clock,
November (dash).

A fearful shock
Of arms occurred at (blank) to-day,

And I'm at liberty to say
That the result was (blank-dash-blank),
For which we have the (blanks) to thank.
The whole (dash) Corps of (censored) Huns,
Supported by (omitted) guns,
Advanced at daylight, and were faced
By (here a passage is erased),
Who held a very strong position
Resting upon (a long omission).
The (blanks) were able to advance
And occupy (a town in France);
But presently the (blank) Division
Attacked the trenches of (excision),
And soon (blank-blank), and then (dash-dash),
(Dash-blank, dash-blank) a fearful crash
(A paragraph omitted here),
As a result of which it's clear
That further efforts will (the rest
Of the report has been suppressed)."

"That's *very* interesting, isn't it?" said the Dog after a pause.

"Very," Alice agreed. "It will help people to understand the war, won't it? The Censor, or Nonsensor, or whatever they call him, must be a great stimulus to recruiting."

Alice rang the bell again.

"It's no good ringing," remarked the Dog,

"the Duchess is much too busy to attend to business. If I were you I'd walk straight in."

This seemed to be the best thing to do, so Alice pushed open the door and went into the house.

Inside were a lot of passages, with offices on each side, and in the offices were heaps of people all very busy. "Much too busy to talk to me," Alice thought; "I'm sure they wouldn't like to be interrupted." Fortunately, at intervals along the passages there were illuminated notices saying, "This way to the Duchess," and presently she came to a door labelled, "Walk in and see what the Duchess is doing. Interviewers and photographers especially welcome." Alice opened the door and went in.

She found herself in a big room like an office, but full of very brilliant lights, all arranged so as to shine on the Duchess, who was sitting in a revolving chair before a desk in the middle, nursing a baby dressed in red tape and looking very puny and neglected. She was evidently trying to pose for a Cinematograph Operator who was working his machine in one corner.

"There's certainly too much light in this room," Alice said to herself, rubbing her eyes.

Now and then the Operator lit a piece of

magnesium wire, and the glare made even the Duchess blink; as for the Baby, it screwed up its eyes and howled piteously. The only thing in the room that seemed quite indifferent was a large brown bear that was wandering round and round very silently.

“Please would you tell me,” said Alice a little timidly, “why your bear is so restless?”

“It isn’t mine,” said the Duchess. “It’s a Russian bear, and that’s why.”

“I didn’t know that Russian bears——” Alice began.

“They don’t,” the Duchess interrupted. “But it isn’t a real one; it’s only a rumour. It annoys me very much, first turning up in one place and then in another, and then disappearing just when I have begun to believe in it, and have started dozens of Committees to look after it.”

“But can’t it look after itself?” Alice asked.

“Of course it can,” said the Duchess; “but in that case where do *I* come in? Why, I’ve started a Society to provide it with hot tea at Inverness and a foot-warmer on the journey down, and it doesn’t come that way! And I’ve formed a Committee to scrape the snow off its paws, and there isn’t any; And I’ve talked about

it to *everyone*, and said I *know* it's true, and it turns out to be only a rumour. It's a horrid ungrateful beast, and I can't get any credit out of it!"

"Never mind," said Alice, trying to comfort her, for she looked as if she might burst into tears at any moment; "after all, you've got your nice house and your dear little baby."

"Dear!" cried the Duchess; "*expensive*, you mean! It's a nasty, useless little nuisance."

"What is its name?" asked Alice, who was very fond of babies, even ugly ones.

"It's name is all right," said the Duchess; "in fact, it's a good name. It's called 'The International Society of Unqualified War-nuts.' But it doesn't get on, and I don't understand it, and I wish I'd never seen the sickly little brat!"

"Then why don't you get someone to look after it who *does* understand it?" Alice inquired.

"That's all very well," said the Duchess, "but where should *I* come in?"

"I don't know how to handle the wretched thing," she went on.

Alice was inclined to think she was speaking the truth, as she was certainly holding it the

wrong way up, and had got it into a terrible mess.

Just then the baby began to cry again, and the Duchess started to sing a sort of lullaby to it, giving it a violent shake at the end of each line :

*The limelight falls
In crowded halls
On platforms duly elevated ;
The public haste
To praise my taste
For patriotism unabated.*

Blow, trumpet, blow ! Set the glad news a-going.

*Blow, trumpet ! Answer echoes, growing, growing,
growing.*

While the Duchess sang the second verse of the song she kept tossing the baby violently up and down, and the poor little thing howled so that Alice could hardly hear the words :

*O hark ! O hear !
How loud and clear
The hangers-on repeat the story !
By blatant bluff,
And pictured puff,
My reputation leaps to glory.*

Blow ! and who cares if blue-black ink is snowing !

*Blow, trumpet ! Answer echoes, growing, growing,
growing.*

“ Here ! you may nurse it a bit, if you like ! ”

the Duchess said to Alice, flinging the baby at her as she spoke. "It's getting so thin that I'm ashamed to take it into the limelight, for fear of people seeing through it."

Alice caught it with some difficulty, and carried it out into the open air.

It was in a terribly tangled state, and when she had straightened it out a bit she found that there was really hardly anything there but red tape, and it certainly had no backbone. However, she carried it along for some time, hoping that it would improve, but it got lighter and lighter, until it faded out of existence altogether.

"Well, it's no use hanging on to a lot of red tape," said Alice to herself, and she put it down by the side of the path, and walked on into the wood.

Presently she came to a place where a great many paths diverged in all directions, and she was just wondering which way to go when she was a little startled by seeing the Russian Bear sitting on a bough of a tree a few yards off.

It looked good-natured, she thought; still, it had *very* long claws, and a great many teeth, so she felt that it ought to be treated with respect.

"Russian Bear," she began, rather nervously,



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“She was a little startled by seeing the Russian bear.”

“would you please tell me which way to go?”

“It doesn’t matter,” said the Bear, “because you won’t get there, anyway. Now I started from Russia and landed in Scotland, and went by Great Northern, North Western, and Midland; and I landed at Avonmouth and went by Great Western; and I did the whole journey by the North Sea; and I came round by Siberia and Canada; and I changed my uniform in France; and *then* where do you think I was?”

“I’m sure I don’t know,” said Alice politely.

“Why,” said the Bear, “in Russia, of course.”

“How annoying for you!” Alice exclaimed.

“Not at all,” said the Bear; “I should get along nicely enough if interfering people would leave me alone, and not call me a steam-roller, and wrap me up in rumours, and see me where I’m not. That old Duchess is the worst of the lot!”

“What is *she* doing now?” asked Alice.

“Oh, she’s *very* busy,” said the Bear. She’s getting up a show of Tableaux Vivants for the Blind.”

“But they won’t see them!” Alice objected.

“Oh, *that’s* all right,” said the Bear; they

are going to do them in Braile. Besides, her schemes never amount to anything."

"Then why does she trouble about them?" asked Alice.

"Oh, she wants to get the credit for doing *something*," said the Bear, "and if she can't, she wants to make sure that no one else will get it. But I must be bobbing up in a new place. Good-bye!" And it vanished suddenly.

Alice was not much surprised at this, she was getting so used to queer things happening. While she was looking at the place where it had been, it suddenly appeared again. "By-the-bye, what became of the baby?" said the Bear. "I'd nearly forgotten to ask."

"It dissolved into thin air," Alice said.

"I thought it would," said the Bear. "It was always a transparent farce."

"How did you get there again?" Alice asked; "I didn't see you coming."

"No, I always travel with the blinds down," said the Bear, and vanished again.

Alice waited a little, half expecting to see it again, but it did not appear, and after a minute or two she walked on until she came to

a sign-post labelled: "This way to the News-Wolff. All the latest fables. Complete satisfaction guaranteed." The other arm was labelled: "To the Blonde Beast. Crimes committed on easy terms. Special this day—Murders and Arson."

"Well, they neither of them sound very pleasant," said Alice to herself, "but I think the News-Wolff will be the least objectionable." As she said this she looked up, and there was the Bear again, sitting on a branch of a tree.

"I shall hope to see you in Berlin," said the Bear.

"Thanks very much," replied Alice; "and I wish you wouldn't keep appearing and vanishing so suddenly; you make me quite giddy."

"All right," said the Bear; and this time it vanished quite slowly, beginning with an official statement and ending with a rumour, which was still very persistent for some time afterwards.

"Well! I've often seen a bear without a rumour," thought Alice, "but a rumour without a bear! It's the most curious thing I ever saw in all my life."

She turned along the path towards the News Wolff, and presently arrived opposite to a little house surrounded by a pretty garden.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MAD TEA-PARTY.

THERE was a table set out under the lindens in front of the house, and the Blonde Beast and the News Wolff were having tea at it; a Citizen was sitting between them, very much depressed, and the other two were using him simply as a means of support, resting their elbows on him, and talking above his head. "Very uncomfortable for the Citizen," thought Alice; "only I suppose he's accustomed to people looking down on him."

The table was almost entirely in the shade, but the three were all crowded together in the one sunny corner of it. "No room! No room!" they cried out when they saw Alice coming. "There's *plenty* of room!" said Alice indignantly, and she sat down in a comfortable armchair.

"Heard the news?" the Blonde Beast inquired in an encouraging tone.

"No," said Alice, beginning to get interested. "What is it?"

“There isn’t any, stupid!” said the Blonde Beast.

“Then it was very rude of you to ask me,” said Alice angrily.

“Rude!” chuckled the Blonde Beast. “Why, I could say things compared to which that is the peroration of an encomium!”

Alice had no idea what he meant, so she let the matter drop. There was a long pause, and the Blonde Beast began to whistle the *“Wacht am Rhein,”* very flat and with a lot of wrong notes.

“Liar!” said the News Wolff suddenly. He had been looking at Alice for some time with great curiosity, and this was his first speech.

“You should learn not to be impertinent,” Alice said with some severity.

“I said it first,” answered the News Wolff, quite unabashed.

“But *I* wasn’t going to say it,” Alice replied.

“*Weren’t* you,” said the News Wolff, looking very surprised. “Why not?”

This was another difficult situation, and a prolonged silence was only broken by the News Wolff.

“What is the difference between a Kaiser and a Cannibal?” he inquired.

“Come, we shall have some fun now,” thought Alice. “I’m glad they’ve begun asking riddles. I believe I can guess that,” she added aloud.

“Do you mean that you think you know?” said the News Wolff.

“Exactly so,” said Alice.

“Then you should say what you mean,” the News Wolff went on.

“I do,” Alice hastily replied; “at least—at least I mean what I say—that’s the same thing, you know.”

“Not the same thing a bit!” said the News Wolff. “Why, you might just as well say that ‘His head’s in the air’ is the same thing as ‘The air’s in his head’,” and he stared pointedly at the Blonde Beast, who stopped whistling immediately, and remarked:

“You might just as well say that ‘I swallow all I hear’ is the same thing as ‘I hear all I swallow’,” and he took a very noisy gulp at his tea.

“You might just as well say,” added the

Citizen dreamily, "that 'I'm told what to believe' is the same thing as 'I believe what I'm told'."

"It *is* the same thing with you," said the News Wolff; and here the conversation dropped, and the party sat silent for a minute, while Alice thought over all she could remember about Kaisers and Cannibals, which wasn't much.

The Blonde Beast was the first to break the silence. "What year is it?" he said, turning to Alice; he had taken a clock out of his pocket, and was looking at it uneasily.

Alice considered a little, and then said: "Nineteen fourteen."

"Forty-four years wrong!" sighed the Blonde Beast. "I told you not to preserve dates in it," he added, looking angrily at the News Wolff.

"They were the *best* dates," the News Wolff meekly replied.

"Yes; but you must have forgotten the raisins," the Blonde Beast grumbled. "You know," he went on, turning to Alice, "you should never fix on a date without having good raisins."

“ You mean reasons, don’t you ? ” said Alice, a little mystified.

“ No, I don’t,” said the Blonde Beast.

“ The Citizen is depressed again,” said the News Wolff. “ Cheer up ! Cheer up ! Great victory everywhere ! London destroyed ! Paris fallen ! Queen Anne dead ! Hurrah ! Hurrah ! ”

The Citizen gazed round blankly, and spoke as if he had been hypnotised: “ Of course, of course ; just what I was going to remark myself.”

“ Have you guessed the riddle yet ? ” the Blonde Beast said, turning to Alice again. “ What is the difference between a Kaiser and a Cannibal ? ”

“ No ; I give it up,” Alice replied. What’s the answer ? ”

“ There isn’t any,” said the Blonde Beast.

“ Any *what* ? ” asked Alice, puzzled.

“ Answer ! ” replied the News Wolff.

“ Difference ! ” grunted the Citizen.

“ News ! ” said the Blonde Beast.

This brought them back to the beginning of the conversation, and Alice began to think that

their idea was to talk a lot without really saying anything.

“It’s nice to have tea in the open air, isn’t it?” she remarked, feeling that she ought to make conversation.

“Air!” said the News Wolff contemptuously. “Why, I’ve known airs compared to which you’d call this a vacuum!”

“I’m sure I shouldn’t,” Alice contradicted, “because it *is* air, you know!”

“It isn’t *it*, it’s *them!*” said the Blonde Beast. “You should see our Kaiser put on airs —lots of them.”

“I don’t like them when they are *that* kind,” said Alice.

“It isn’t *them*,” said the News Wolff; “why, we’ve got an heir-apparent who’s *It!*”

“But that’s a different sort of air,” said Alice, who was getting quite puzzled.

“Talking of airs,” said the News Wolff, “I used to know several myself—all different. I remember at the Kaiser’s concert I had to sing “‘The good ship Goeben put to sea.’

You know the song, perhaps?”

“I don’t think so,” said Alice rashly.

“It goes like this, you know,” said the News Wolff:

“*The good ship Goeben put to sea,
Because they told her to.
A terror to her foes was she,
And also to her crew.
Chock full of guns from stern to stem,
Equipped to do and dare,
Or emulate the fighting Tém—
The fighting Téméraire.*”

“*The Captain quavered, ‘Close without
Lie foes of metal tough;
I feel there’s not the slightest doubt
The sea is rather rough.
But, wet or fine, we’ll steam across,
Full speed ahead, and thus
Approach the Turk, for he’s the Boss—
For he’s the Bos-phor-us.’*”

“*The band blared forth the ‘Wacht am Rhein,’
Each man was at his post;
A finer sight was seldom seen,
Than when she left the coast.
And no unlucky chance befell
To cheat them of their want.
So now I hear they’ve gone to Hell—
They’ve gone to Hellespont.*”

“Well, I hadn’t *really* finished the last verse,” said the News Wolff, “when the Kaiser jumped up and bawled out: “He’s speaking the truth! He’s betraying the Fatherland! Imprison him! Torture him! Have him cultured!””

“How *dreadfully* savage!” exclaimed Alice.

“Not at all,” said the News Wolff hurriedly, noticing that the Citizen seemed to be pricking up his ears. “He has the fiery temper of all true aristocrats, the high determination of all great monarchs. His people love him and respect him. He is noble; he is magnificent; he is——” At this point he gave a violent dig at the ribs of the Citizen, whom uttered “Hear! hear!” very hastily.

“That sort of stuff may be all right in the papers,” remarked the Blonde Beast, “but it’s no good to me. I vote the young lady tells us a story.”

“I’m afraid I can’t do *that*,” said Alice hastily, “but I *think* I could repeat some poetry.”

“Very well,” said the Blonde Beast, “repeat ‘Father William.’”

Alice folded her hands and began:

“‘*You are old, Father William,*’ the young man said,

‘*And the end of your life is in sight;*
Yet you’re frequently patting your God on the head—
Do you think, at your age, it is right?’”

“‘*In my youth,*’ said his sire, ‘*I established my case*
As a being apart and divine;
And I think if I try to keep God in his place,
He ought to support me in mine.’”

• • • • •
“‘*You are old,*’ said the youth, ‘*as I mentioned*
before,
And flight is exceedingly tiring;
And yet you attempt, like an eagle, to soar—
What made you so very aspiring?’”

“‘*From my youth,*’ said the sage, ‘*I was never the*
thing;
My conduct was always absurd;
And now I feel certain, unless I take wing,
That Europe will “give me the bird.””

• • • • •
“‘*You are old,*’ said the youth, ‘*and a bit double-*
faced,
And your head is too large for your hat;
Yet you try to remodel the world to your taste—
Pray what is the meaning of that?’”

“‘*In my youth,*’ said his sire, ‘*from the day of my birth,*
Such merit through culture I got,
That its blessings I’d force on the whole blooming
earth,
If it meant killing off all the lot.’”

• • • • •



“And yet you attempt, like an eagle, to soar—”

“ ‘ You are old,’ said the youth, ‘ as I think you’re aware,
For it’s certainly time that you knew it ;
Yet I see you throw bricks, and not buns, to the bear—
Do you think it is tactful to do it ? ’ ”

“ ‘ I have answered three questions, and that is enough,’
Said his father, ‘ and now I have done ;
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff ?
Trot along, and steal pictures, my son ! ’ ”

“ That’s all wrong,” said the News Wolff angrily.

“ Perhaps it is,” Alice retorted ; “ but it’s true, anyway ! ”

“ Truth has nothing to do with it,” said the News Wolff.

“ She’s no good,” the Blonde Beast interrupted. “ The Citizen shall tell us a story.”

“ Yes, please do ! ” said Alice.

“ And be quick about it,” added the News Wolff, “ or you’ll be depressed again before it’s done.”

“ What about ? ” asked the Citizen grumpily.

“ Something about birds or butterflies,” Alice suggested.

"I don't know anything about them," said the Citizen, "my surroundings are too dull for them."

"Well, then, moths," Alice put in. "You know," she added, "those things that are attracted by a candle."

"Once upon a time there was a Goth—a death's head Goth," the Citizen began in a great hurry, "and he was attracted by a Vandal, and their names were Anathema and Maranatha, and they lived in the German States——"

"Which States?" the Blonde Beast interrupted.

"Sometimes in a State of Savagery, and sometimes in a State of Intoxication, and sometimes both," said the Citizen, after thinking a minute or two.

"And what did they live on?" said Alice, who always took a great interest in questions of eating and drinking.

"They lived on the wing—the right wing, I think it was," the Citizen went on.

"On the wing?" Alice repeated, very much confused. "Of a chicken, or what?"

"What," said the Citizen.

Alice tried a little to fancy to herself what such an extraordinary way of living would be like, but it puzzled her too much, so she went on : “But how did they spend their time ?”

“I want a fresh place,” interrupted the Blonde Beast ; “let’s all move on one.”

He moved on as he spoke, and the Citizen followed him obediently ; the News Wolff pushed into the Citizen’s place, and Alice rather unwillingly took the place of the News Wolff. The Blonde Beast was the only one who got any advantage from the change, as he had new opportunities of making a dirty mess ; and Alice was a good deal worse off than before, as the News Wolff had been smearing butter over a fiasco to make it look like a victory.

Alice did not wish to hurt the Citizen’s feelings, so she asked again, “How did they spend their time ?”

“They didn’t,” said the Citizen, “they spent other people’s ; and, when the Vandal went out, the Goth went out too ; and, when the Vandal was very bright, the Goth singed his wings.”

“And did they go to school ?” Alice inquired.

“Yes,” said the Citizen; “and they had a French master who tried to teach them to write.”

“To write what?” Alice inquired.

“The wrong,” said the Citizen; “but they didn’t want to do it. And they learnt to draw.”

“What did they draw?” asked Alice.

“They drew swords,” said the Citizen, “and when the swords were out they drew fire, and when the fire got too hot they drew away, and when they lost the way they drew maps.”

“So they drew lots of things,” said Alice encouragingly.

“Yes,” said the Citizen, “they drew lots, and the ones that won got Iron Crosses, and the ones that lost got cultured, and——”

“And it was a glorious victory,” shouted the News Wolff, “and the whole of the enemy’s fleet was sunk!”

“How?” Alice inquired.

“By *mine!*” said the News Wolff. “You don’t suppose we could sink them any other way, do you?”

“No,” said Alice, “I don’t think——”



"They were trying to smother the Citizen in the teapot."

“ You look it,” said the Blonde Beast.

This piece of rudeness was more than Alice could bear; she got up in great disgust and walked off. The Citizen looked very depressed again, and neither of the others took the least notice of her going. The last time she saw them they were trying to smother the Citizen in the teapot.

“ Poor thing,” said Alice to herself as she picked her way through the wood. “ But perhaps it’s kinder to keep him in the dark, so that he won’t know what’s *really* going on.”

CHAPTER V.

ARMY-BARMY.

PRESENTLY she came to a big grass plot sprinkled with rows of little beds in which flowers were growing. Round one of the beds were three people, who were apparently gardeners, though they were all armed with big paste-pots and huge brushes, and were busily whitewashing the red flowers on a very dishevelled lily.

Alice thought this a very curious thing, and she went nearer to watch them. As she came up to them she heard one of them say: "I'm sick to death of this Louvain lily! It's given us more trouble than all the others put together."

"What about the Rheims rose?" said the second gardener.

"Not as bad as *this*," remarked the third. "The red still shows through after a dozen coats of whitewash."

"Would you tell me," said Alice, a little timidly, "why you are painting those flowers?"

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*"They were all armed with big paste-pots and
huge brushes."*

"Why, the fact is, you see, Miss," said the first gardener, "the Kaiser says that these flowers ought to be white, or anyhow ought to be made to look white. And the head-gardener says they *are* white, and it's only a 'psychological phenomenon in hysteria' that makes 'em look red. And the Kaiser says that he doesn't know about that, but, if they are not whitewashed in double-quick time, we shall all be cultured."

"Yes," said the second gardener, "and Army-Barmy has fallen on the plant, and made it worse than ever, and *we* shall be blamed."

"Who is Army-Barmy?" Alice enquired.

"You'd better ask him," said the third gardener. "He's just there," and he pointed over Alice's shoulder.

Army-Barmy was sitting on the top of a high pinnacle, such a narrow and pointed one that Alice quite wondered how he could keep his balance, and, while his eyes were continually rolling round in an effort to look both ways at once, he didn't take the least notice of her, so that she began to think he was nothing but a mechanical toy after all.

"And how exactly like a balloon he is!" she said aloud, standing with her hands ready to catch him in case he fell.

"It's *very* provoking," Army-Barmy said, after a long silence, "to be mistaken for a gas-bag—*very*."

"I said you *looked* like a balloon, Sir," Alice gently explained. "And some balloons are very useful, you know," she added, hoping to turn her remark into a sort of compliment.

"Civilians," said Army-Barmy, staring haughtily over her head, "have no sense of decency or respect for authority."

Alice didn't know what to say to this, so she stood and softly repeated to herself:

*"Army-Barmy climbed to the top ;
Army-Barmy had a great drop ;
All William's horses and all William's men
Couldn't make Army-Barmy a favourite again."*

"Don't stand there muttering to yourself," said Army-Barmy, staring at her rudely, "but tell me your name and rank."

"My *name* is Alice, but I haven't any rank."

"Then how dare you walk on the footpath?" Army-Barmy asked impatiently.

"There isn't any footpath," said Alice mildly.

“Then how dare you mean to walk on it if there was one?” Army-Barmy retaliated angrily.

He was getting more and more annoyed, and more and more inflated, and Alice thought that if someone were to prick him with a pin he would go off like a bubble.

“Put your feet together, salute when you speak, and don’t attempt to answer your superior officer,” cried Army-Barmy.

“What am I to say if I don’t answer?” Alice asked, smiling.

This made Army-Barmy choke with rage.

“If you smile at me,” he stuttered, “you shall be imprisoned! You shall be beheaded!! You shall be cultured!!! Do you know who I am? Do you know what inflates me so?”

“Please tell me,” said Alice.

“It is the spirit of militarism” he growled. “It’s *me*,” he went on, regardless of grammar, “that has made the German nation the greatest thing on earth. It’s *me* that inspires the Kaiser. Think of that, now, *the Kaiser has promised me*—ah, you may turn pale, if you like! You didn’t think I was going to say that, did you? *The Kaiser has promised me—with his very own mouth—to—to—*”

"I know," Alice interrupted, "to send all his horses and all his men."

"Now I declare that's too bad!" Army-Barmy cried, breaking into a sudden passion; "you've been spying at Dockyards—you've been bribing my agents—you've been purloining official reports, or you couldn't have known it!"

"I haven't, indeed!" Alice said very gently, "it's in a book."

"It's that Bernhardi again," Army-Barmy said in a calmer tone. "He's always giving the game away. It's a great mistake to go explaining just what you mean to do before it's done. Now *I've* had a plan for forty years, but nobody has even *guessed* what it was. They can't draw *me* out," he added proudly.

"What is it?" Alice asked innocently.

"Well, it's like this," said Army-Balmy, quite carried away with excitement; "when the day comes——"

"What day?" Alice inquired.

"*The* day, and don't interrupt," he answered brusquely, "or I shan't tell you about it. When the day comes, I shall have a bonfire and burn all the treaties I don't like, and keep all the ones

I do, and then I shall send ultimatums—ever so many—and then I shall get moving, and I shall go up and up and up until—until—”

“Until you disappear altogether,” Alice suggested.

“Not at all,” said Army-Barmy hurriedly, “Until everyone sees how beautiful I am, and they all worship me and want to be like me.”

“But suppose they don’t want?” said Alice.

“If they don’t want, I shall make them. It’s part of my policy. I will tell you all about it,” he went on. “Sit down, fold your hands, and prepare to receive cavalry—I mean poetry.”

Alice felt that she really *ought* to listen to it, so she sat down and said, “Thank you,” rather sadly.

“*In summer, when the fields are green,
I mean to teach you what I mean—*”

“If I can find out myself,” he added as an explanation.

“I understand,” said Alice.

“And *I* overstand,” said Army-Barmy, “because I’m more important than you.” Alice was silent.

*"In autumn, when the leaves are brown,
I'll batter half of Europe down.*

*In winter, when the fields are white,
I'll kick you out to sleep at night.*

*In spring, if you've survived the storm,
I'll murder you to keep you warm.*

*And, in the manner I have stated,
I'll get you truly cultivated."*

"I'm afraid I don't quite understand the system," said Alice.

"Then I'll teach it you," Army-Barmy replied.

*"I sent a message to Brabant ;
I told them, 'This is what I want.'*

*The little Belgians, rude and free,
They sent an answer back to me.*

*The little Belgians' answer was :
'We cannot do it, Sir, because—'*

"I'm afraid it's very difficult," said Alice.

"That's because it's only diplomacy up to now," Army-Balmy replied; "It gets easier further on."

*"I sent to them again to say,
'It will be better to obey.'*

*The Belgians answered with a grin
'Why, what a temper you are in !'*

*I told them once, I told them twice :
They would not listen to advice.*

*I took a cannon, large and new,
Fit for the deed I had to do.*

*My pulses thumped, my eyes went red ;
I filled the barrel full of lead.*

*A Grey man came and said : ‘ You know,
‘ Your treaty guarantees them, so—’*

*I said to him, I said it plain,
‘ Then we must tear it up again.’*

*I said it very loud and clear ;
I went and shouted in his ear.”*

Army-Barmy raised his voice almost to a scream as he repeated this verse, and Alice thought, with a shudder, “I wouldn’t have been the Grey man for *anything!*”

“ *But he was very stiff and proud ;
He said : ‘ You needn’t shout so loud.’*

*And he was very proud and stiff ;
He said : ‘ You’d better try it, if—’*

*I took a maxim from the shelf ;
I went to stir them up myself.*

*And when I found the door was locked,
I pulled and pushed and kicked and knocked.*

*And when I found the door was shut,
I tried to turn the handle, but——”*



*“I said it very loud and clear;
I went and shouted in his ear.”*

There was a long pause.

“Is that all?” Alice timidly asked.

“That’s all, up to date,” said Army-Barmy. “Call on me next month in Paris, and I’ll tell you the rest. Good-bye.”

This was rather sudden, Alice thought; but, after such a *very* strong hint, she felt that it would be hardly civil to stay. So she got up and held out her hand.

“Good-bye, till we meet again!” she said.

“I shouldn’t know you if we ever *did* meet,” Army-Barmy replied in a supercilious tone. “All civilians look alike to me.”

“You needn’t be proud,” Alice complained.

“Proud!” said Army-Barmy, growing bigger and more inflated every moment. “Do you know what it is that puffs me up? It is the spirit of the super-man; the strength of the super-soldier. Do you know what this pinnacle is on which I am based? It is the legend of Prussian invincibility. Do you think it worth *my* while to bother about civilians?”

“You’re not very polite, anyhow,” Alice retorted.

“I’m not paid to be polite,” Army-Barmy

shouted. "It's the business of civilians to be civil and of army men to be army-so!" And, without any provocation, he suddenly stretched out his arm and boxed her ears violently.

This was *too* insulting, and, besides, it hurt, and made Alice very angry, so she reached up and hit at him as hard as she could. She could not reach very well, so she only hit the pinnacle, which came down with a *rum*; there was a noise like a lot of paper bags all bursting at once; and, when she looked up, Arny-Barmy had quite disappeared.

"Well, I'm glad he's gone," said Alice to herself; "of all the unsatisfactory people I *ever* met——"

She never finished the sentence, for that very moment soldiers came running through the wood, at first in two's and three's, then in hundreds, and at last in such crowds that they seemed to fill the whole forest. Alice got behind a tree, and watched them go by.

She thought that in all her life she had never seen soldiers so clumsy or inconsiderate. They were always putting their feet into it, and, if anything very harmless or beautiful was in their road, they were certain to stamp on it and spoil it.

Then came the horses. Having four feet,

these managed to do even more harm than the men. It seemed to be a regular rule for them to trample on everything in their way, and even to go out of their way to be cruel and destructive.

The confusion got worse every moment, and Alice was very pleased to get out of the wood into an open place, where there were no soldiers in sight.

“Well, whatever they do,” she said to herself, “their silly old bubble has burst, and they’ll never be able to get him up on to his pinnacle again.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRIAL.

THE path along which she was now walking seemed very familiar, and, presently she found herself again face to face with the Red King. This time he was not asleep, but very much awake. He was dressed in shining armour and steel gauntlets, and looked very fierce, and rather out of breath.

“Did you see them?” he enquired excitedly.

“If you mean the soldiers,” said Alice, “of course I did. And a nice mess they are making, too!”

“They are all mine,” said the Red King, proudly. “They would do anything for me—*absolutely anything!* And what do you think I would do for them?”

“I’m sure I don’t know,” said Alice.

“Why,” said the Red King, delightedly, “I’d sacrifice the lot—yes, the *whole* lot—for

my own good. 'That is to say, of course, for the good of my people.'

"Does it do them good to be sacrificed?" Alice asked.

"Certainly, for such a noble object," said the Red King, slapping himself on the chest.

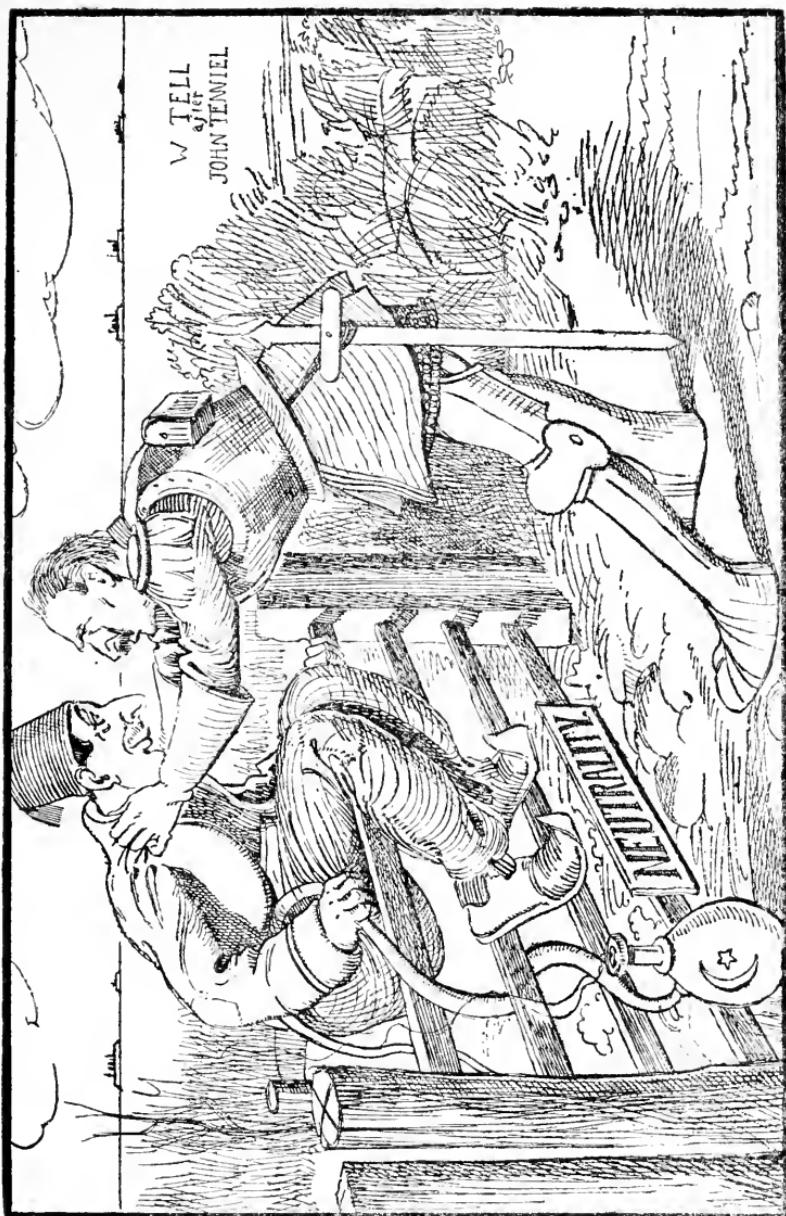
Alice thought he was quite right about being an object, but she was not so sure if noble was the right word, so she said nothing.

"Yes," the Red King went on, "and in case I lose them all, I've found a lot of young Turks that I can sacrifice too. Wasn't that clever of me?"

"Very," said Alice, "and how did you manage it?"

"I'll tell you," said the Red King. "Sit down, and listen carefully," and he began:—

*"I'll tell you everything I can
In plain and common sense,
I saw a youthful Ottoman
A-sitting on the fence.
'Come, tell me true, Young Turk! I said
'Where did you get your fleet?
His answer burbled through my head
Like flies around the meat."*



"A youthful Ottoman, a-sitting on the fence."

*He said 'We profit by the tips
That people give to us,
And sit and wait for battleships
Beside the Bosphorus.
And these we buy from friends !' he cried,
' Who hate the stormy deep,
And that is how we get supplied
With navies on the cheap.'*

*But I was thinking of a way
To make cathedrals bright,
By filling them with oil and hay
And setting it alight,
And by the blaze to cook my goose,
And get it really hot,
And so I cried ' Now what's the use
Of all the men you've got ? '*

*With soft demeanour he explained,
' We do whate'er we can ;
Our troops are scrupulously trained
Upon the German plan ;
And all our sailors have to go
To sea from time to time,
But hate to sail, because, you know,
Our porte is so Sublime '.*

*But I was thinking of a plan
For spying on the docks,
By riding in a tradesman's van
Beneath a biscuit box.
So, having no reply to make
To what he said to me,
I cried ' What measures do you take
To keep your country free ? '*

*His accents mild took up the tale,
He said ' We have our fears,
So when dogs growl, we never fail
To set them by the ears.
And while they thrash the matter out,
And give each other fits,
We creep judiciously about,
And sneak the juicy bits.*

*I heard him then, for I had quite
Completed my design,
For stealing into Rheims by night
And drinking all the wine.
I thanked him much for giving me
Such useful little tips ;
Especially the way that he
Obtained his battleships.*

*And now whene'er I chance to tell
An extra whopping lie,
Or scheme unusually well
To wipe my neighbour's eye,
Or if I feel the painful toe
Of outraged providence,
I weep, for it reminds me so
Of that young Turk I used to know,
Whose aims were high, whose ways were low,
Who played such tricks on friend and foe,
Whose forts, before the Serb and Co.,
Went down like ninepins in a row ;
Whose frontiers shifted to and fro,
And altered every year or so,*

*Who seldom faced an honest blow,
But dodged it with acute diplo-
Macy and often scored, although
He made a very moderate show
When into war he had to go,
Who muttered mumblingly and low,
But told me all I wished to know,
What summer evening long ago,
A-sitting on a fence."*

"Thank you very much," said Alice, wishing to be polite, "that was quite interesting."

"Interesting indeed," said the Red King angrily, "it's not interesting, it's *marvellous*. Why, I wrote it myself."

"But it doesn't explain how you managed to get the young Turk off the fence on your side," Alice objected.

"Oh, that's easy," said the Red King. "You see, it was only a little trick about the battleships. They weren't really his, but people thought they were. And so I got him into trouble with everyone else, and he had to be friendly with *me*."

"That was rather a nasty thing to do, wasn't it?" Alice asked.

"Oh, well, you can't be particular nowadays," said the Red King.

“Perhaps *you* can’t,” Alice began, “but you needn’t suppose that other people——”

At this moment she was interrupted by the sound of a very loud trumpet that seemed to be blowing right in her ear.

“It’s the trial,” cried the Red King, “come along quick, or we shall be late.” And he started running. Alice tried to keep up, but he went faster and faster, and she only just got round the corner in time to see him disappear into a big palace, the door of which stood open.

Alice waited a little to get her breath, and then walked in after him. She found herself in a huge law court. The Red King was sitting on a throne at one end, and near him, but rather in the background, were Francis and Joseph. On the other side was the News-Wolff, and a Young Turk, well controlled by the Blonde Beast.

In the body of the court was the Dog-Sentry, arm-in-arm with the French cock, and the Russian Bear, who looked very solid now, and not a bit like a rumour.

“Who is being tried?” Alice whispered to one of the spectators.

“Europe,” he answered.



“The Red King was sitting on a throne.”

“Why?” Alice asked.

“For not being German,” he said.

“Silence in Court,” roared the Red King, “Read the charge.” The News-Wolff unfolded a big sheet of paper and read—

“The Continent of Europe is indicted on the charge of not being completely German. If the charge is proved, she is liable to be devastated and cultured.”

“Guilty!” shouted the Red King at once, “Condemned to be——”

“Please, your Majesty,” said the News-Wolff, “there’s a lot to come before that.”

“Call the witness,” said the Red King.

The Blonde Beast stepped forward.

“Where do you come from?” asked the Red King.

“From the military school,” said the Blonde Beast.

“And what did you learn there?” asked the King.

“Bleeding and biting,” said the Blonde Beast.

“That’s very important,” said the King, turning to the News-Wolff. “He says he learnt Feeding and Fighting.”

The News-Wolff began to write hurriedly.

“I didn’t say that at all,” the Blonde Beast objected, “I said ‘bleeding and biting.’”

“It’s the same thing ;” said the King, “and what else did you learn ?”

“Nothing,” said the Blonde Beast.

“That’s *very* important,” said the King. “And what do you know about this case ?”

“I picked *this* up in the wood,” said the Blonde Beast, producing a very dirty sheet of paper with writing on it.

“Read it,” said the King, and the Blonde Beast started at once——

*“They told me he was rude and wild,
And mentioned it to her ;
She said she would not give the child
A spotless character.*

*Though things ought never to have gone
So far ‘twixt me and you,
He meant to push the matter on—
We know it to be true.*

*I gave him time, they gave him powers,
You gave him good advice,
But still he turned on mine and ours
Though his were just as nice.*

*His notion was that he had been
(Before he had this fit)
An obstacle that came between
Heaven, himself, and it.*

*If I or she should chance to be
Removed from bad to worse,
He takes the land, he grabs the sea,
He wants the Universe."*

"That proves her guilty," cried the Red King, delightedly.

"Rubbish!" growled the Dog-Sentry.

Alice looked round, and was surprised to see that the Dog and the Cock were growing bigger and bigger every minute. As for the Bear, he was big to start with, but now he was simply huge.

The Red King looked rather nervous, and dragged out a Big book, from which he read—

"Rule 42. Dogs not admitted.

"Rule 43. All people bigger than myself are out of court."

“We shan’t go!” remarked the Dog-Sentry, placidly.

“Turn them out!” cried the King to the Blonde Beast. “Annihilate them! Culture them!!”

Then the struggle began. Everything got upset, and the people in the court crowded for the exits. The Blonde Beast tried hard, but he made very little impression, for the Bear and the Dog and the Cock kept getting bigger and stronger.

The noise was terrific, and the whole building shook till Alice was afraid it would come down with a run. Francis and Joseph soon disappeared, and the Red King himself was just falling off his throne when Alice suddenly woke.

She found herself lying in her own bed in her own room. She felt very weak, and supposed she must have been delirious, but now she was much better, and quite sensible again. Outside, in the street, a Boy was calling “Spechul Edishun! —Latest news of the Great War!”

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